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Since January 1996

### *Time to set a new corporate course for the New Year.*

On November 1, 2018, 94,000 Google employees worldwide walked off away from their jobs and protested against the company rather loudly. They were mad – not just upset – at their company's poor handling of sexual abuse allegations against executives.

Google's original tag line that expressed its company's ideal was "Don't be evil". Employees apparently did not believe the company was exactly living up to that vision as it paid out excessive amounts to executives charged with questionable behavior.

Google – now part of the parent company Alphabet – follows an updated mantra: "Do the right thing".

Dictionary.com defines "ethics" to be "a system of moral principles". Great. Going further, Dictionary.com defines "moral" as "of, relating to, or concerned with the principles or rules of right conduct or the distinction between right and wrong".

Ah, easy enough. Ethics is really just doing what is right and not doing what is wrong.

But companies don't really do this.

From customer service that is really risk management to deceptive pricing entangled in bundled products or services that don't really represent what the consumer wants to pushing products or services that the customer doesn't actually need to gleaning information for "customer service" (a.k.a. marketing) purposes, companies engage in unethical behavior every second of every minute of every hour of every day with little concern for their conduct.

Led by executives who are actually people who make the decisions to engage in such wrong practices, these leaders would be shocked to discover that this unethical behavior is actually costlier to their companies than doing what is right. Case in point is that it costs five to ten times more to acquire a new customer than to retain an existing customer. So, when customers lack loyalty and continually switch brands or expand their horizons and try new competitors, forcing companies to increase their marketing because data analytics tells them to, they are only causing their own chaos. When it takes seven customer service agents between the call centers and the "Office of the President" special staffs to handle upset customers, these unnecessary operating costs are because the company at its core is not doing what is right.

The Google employees were protesting more than just how their employer was handling mischievous executives; they were also fed up with certain forced arbitration clauses in their employment contracts among other issues. They were demanding that Google act ethically across a number of employee-impact areas.

Companies have stakeholders in their customers, suppliers/vendors, employees, and investors. Ethical behavior needs to be at the forefront of all stakeholder considerations. Inasmuch as profits are a primary driver, they are not ever, and no longer, the only important consideration and should never eclipse ethical behavior. In fact, the more ethical a company behaves, the cleaner their operations will actually be, and the more loyal their stakeholders will be too.

Shockingly, the people in charge forget that people are impacted, e.g. their own friends, family, and neighbors. Not even inside connections can always help to untangle the labyrinth-like web that is weaved by companies who have grown not to be too big to fail, but rather, are actually too big to cohesively function.

No company is perfect. But ethical companies have found that they can win without compromise.

For information on some of the most ethical companies in the world and how they out-perform the rest, go to: <https://www.worldsmoethicalcompanies.com/>

Thanks for reading.

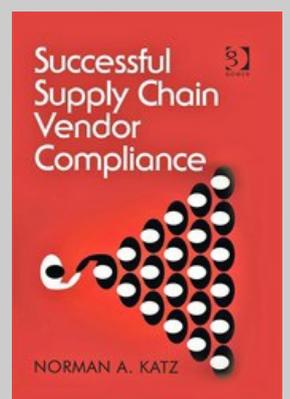
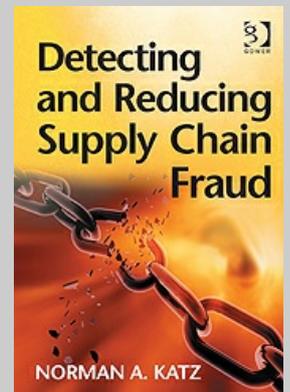


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